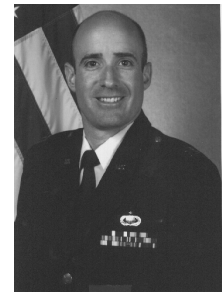


NOTES FROM THE:

Comptroller Training Flight



by Maj JR Weilacher

When you think of your past involvement with the Schoolhouse, what is the first thought that comes to mind? Red cement floors? The sweltering Texas sun? Jack rabbits the size of dogs? If you're like me, it's the memory of cheating death flying on the small commuter airliners between Dallas and Wichita Falls. Luckily, the past few months have afforded me the opportunity to become reacquainted with our Schoolhouse and make some new memories. I'd like to share some of our recent progress with you.

First, let me start by saying that I am proud to lead a flight of about 40 of the finest officers, NCOs, and civilians our career field has to offer. Together, we'll provide training for over 1,400 of our total force comptroller personnel during FY01. Perhaps as important as the technical training we provide, we are the first impression of the comptroller community for our new officers, airmen, and many of our Palace Acquire Interns. Given the retention challenges facing the Air Force and our career field, we're keenly aware of our front line responsibility to move people from being dedicated to the Air Force to being committed to the Air Force.

So what is your Schoolhouse up to? Last November, I had the opportunity to present a stakeholder update to the Financial Management Executive Session. Major issues discussed centered around our efforts to overhaul the Financial Management Basic Officer Course, events impacting enlisted training courses, and ongoing initiatives to improve our Schoolhouse.

On the officer training front, efforts are underway to overhaul the basic officer course. While the current course does a reasonable job of preparing our young officers (85% gaining supervisor satisfaction), the overall course design and flow is the product of a syllabus developed by the career field in 1996. Recent supervisor feedback and senior leadership direction has clearly indicated a need for change. This change is especially important when you consider the fact that over the next two years, approximately 460 lieutenants (a number equal to 53% of all authorized career field officer manning) will attend this course. In response, we're gearing the new course to be a better balance between the financial services, the financial analysis, and the cost and acquisition ends of our business. We're leveraging the Financial Management Staff Officer Course (FMSOC) guest speaker program to get senior level

officer and enlisted interaction with our young officers. Finally, the new course will feature a scenario-based capstone block that will challenge students to tie together the previous 61 days of training to tackle real world comptroller issues.

As for enlisted training, supervisor feedback indicates we're hitting the mark with both our 3-level Financial Management and Comptroller Apprentice Course and 7-level Financial Management and Comptroller Craftsman Courses. In addition to this valued supervisor feedback, our comptroller enlisted force will be the subject of an Occupational Survey Report during the first half of 2001. Performed by the Air Force Occupational Measurement Squadron, their comprehensive review is designed to capture the nature and frequency of tasks currently being performed by our troops in the field. While typically performed every three years, our career field was last reviewed in the mid-eighties. Needless to say, things have changed. While those tasked to complete the questionnaire will find it a time-consuming ordeal, the resulting analysis is critical to designing a curriculum that is in step with the dynamic training needs of our career field. In fact, the results of this survey, combined with the wisdom of our senior enlisted leadership, will form the basis of a training review to be conducted in August 2001.

In addition, we have also begun a number of initiatives to affect the overall quality of the classroom environment. On the facility front, we have completed the addition of an enlisted student phone room, begun extensive self-help renovation of our mock Financial Services Office, and initiated a facelift of our FMSOC classroom. These efforts, combined with your ongoing support of the Command Classroom Sponsorship program, are having a positive influence on the quality of life for our students. In terms of equipment, we have developed and are seeking support for a realistic life cycle replacement plan encompassing our 320 classroom and staff computer workstations, desks, and chairs.

In conclusion, I hope I've been successful in getting you to think about our Schoolhouse. Not so much in terms of jack rabbits or red cement floors, but in terms of our real time efforts to ensure the training and environment provided here is in tune with your needs as we support our career field vision—The best financial support to the world's premier Air Force—anytime, anywhere!